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Eric J. Hentges, PhD, Executive Director
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
U.S. Department of Agriculture
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1034
Alexandria, VA 22302

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August 4, 2004

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Dear Dr. Hentges:

Since my last letter, dated July 16, I have been trying to explain to myself why it is that so many authorities are so easily misled to believe a lie; namely that saturated fat is a major factor in heart disease. Perhaps it's because so few scientists and administrators are scholars.

When a controversy exists, a scholar doesn't choose up sides. He does what John Stuart Mill recommends. He attempts to find out all that can be said about the subject before deciding what to believe. A true scholar is one who, as Mill put it, "has sought for objections and difficulties, instead of avoiding them, and has shut out no light which can be thrown upon the subject from any quarter."

Most sources of public nutrition instruction (columnists, editors, authors, health experts, government officials, etc.) ignore opinion that does not conform to mainstream doctrine regarding what constitutes proper nourishment or what causes health problems such as obesity, degenerative disease, and mental illness. Nor are they aware of the relevant facts that prompt others to develop contrary views.

So here we are with a global obesity epidemic on our hands caused by the global proliferation of foods and beverages that have negative nourishment properties.

Meanwhile, public health services in the USA, Canada, England, and Australia are trying to figure out how to persuade people to eat fewer calories and exercise more.

But gluttony and sloth are not the problem. It's the quality of the food. Foods that do not nourish tend to derange the appetite regulating mechanism causing hunger in some and anorexia in others. The same lousy diet can have opposite effects because of variations in body chemistry.

I urge you and the others responsible for developing the new dietary guidelines to find out what Barry Groves, Mary Enig, Sally Fallon, Uffe Ravnskov, and Gary Taubes have to say about the benefits of eating a diet rich in saturated fat before issuing any further recommendations to the public. These people have done their homework and their opinions reflect a much deeper understanding of how nourishment works than is available from most mainstream health experts.

Sincerely yours,

David Brown

David Brown

Kalispell, MT

Nutrition Education Project

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Tuesday, February 17, 2004

THE DAILY INTER LAKE

Letters to the editor

Dietary guidelines full of mistakes

Barry Popkin is a professor of nutrition at the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is also a leading expert on dietary, physical activity, and body composition change around the world. In an article published in the Orlando Sentinel last fall he noted an enormous increase in consumption of sugar-laden foods and beverages. In his words, "There has been a most systemic sweetening of the world's diet." The amount of fat in people's diets is increasing also. He said, "... the steepest increase is in the use of vegetable oils for cooking."

The proliferation of seed (vegetable) oils in Europe, Africa, and Asia coupled with increased availability of sugar-laden beverages, baked goods, and processed foods is wrecking the health of countless millions. The most obvious indication is the global obesity problem. This is what happens when scientists fail to do their homework.

Politicians make laws and citizens decide what to feed themselves and their children based on

what scientists tell them. Well, those who wrote the most recent dietary guidelines for the U.S. Department of Agriculture made three major mistakes.

First, although they warned consumers to avoid excessive sugar consumption, they failed to define excessive and explain how sugar damages the metabolism through cellular nutrient depletion.

Second, they continued to demonize saturated fats which is silly considering the fact that there is no experimental or clinical evidence linking dietary saturated fat with heart disease.

Third, they failed to warn consumers about the damage associated with seed oil consumption. Cooking oils rich in polyunsaturates tend to make people gain weight and develop heart disease or cancer. They are not heart-healthy fats as the labels on the bottles suggest.

There are 13 distinguished scientists currently revising government dietary recommendations. Let's hope the next Dietary Guidelines for Americans, to be published in January 2005, demonstrate a more accurate understanding of how nourishment works. —David Brown, Kalispell

Americans need to learn: You are what you eat

By DAVID BROWN

The Daily Inter Lake recently published an article headlined, "Restaurants, food companies say they aren't to blame for obesity." Well, if not them, who?

Guest Opinion

In this most litigious of all nations, where many seem to think they are entitled to a riskless existence, there's plenty of blame to go around. The failure to properly understand important aspects of nourishment is widespread and ranges from the consumer (and his children) all the way up to the president of the United States.

Has any president, senator, or congressman ever come up with a good plan to teach Americans how to become more healthy and also see that they have the means available to do so? No? Well why not?

Perhaps biochemist Ross Hume Hall has part of the answer. In the introduction to his 1973 book "Food for Nought" he wrote, "Nourishment of the American populace has undergone a startling transformation since World War II. A

highly individual system of growing and marketing food has been transformed into a gigantic, highly integrated service system in which the object is not to nourish or even to feed, but to force an ever-increasing consumption of fabricated products."

We expect our federal government to protect and improve the public food supply. The government, in turn, relies on learned bodies with scientific expertise to provide sound recommendations for shaping public policy. The question is, why hasn't the scientific community thoroughly documented and assessed the effects of altering our food supply?

Actually they have. The problem is, the food companies exert enormous influence in Washington; so much so in fact that the public is seriously misled by our own government. Anyone who wishes to learn the sordid details would do well to read "Food Politics" by Marion Nestle.

There are others involved. Fats and oils expert and biochemist Dr. Mary Enig reports that the Center for Science in the Public Interest is also misleading the public. In a prepared oral statement for the National Nutrition Summit meeting held on Dec. 9, 1999, at USDA head-

quarters in Washington, D.C., she testified concerning the attempt by the FDA to promote in the minds of consumers the idea that wholesome saturated fats have the same effect as trans fats:

"... the FDA is just responding favorably to a petition by the CSPI ... and its mostly vegetarian nutritionist staff to beat on the dairy and meat industries by having consumers incorrectly connect animal fats with trans fat."

So if you want to make yourself healthy, if you want to avoid cancer, heart disease, diabetes, obesity and all the rest of those metabolic disturbances that stem from poor nutrition, don't look to the federal government for help. Type Sally Fallon, Mary Enig, Weston Price, or Ross Hume Hall into an Internet search engine and find out what these authorities have to say about the modern foods of commerce.

And if you are thinking about suing someone, look in the mirror first. The person facing you is the only one with the power to destroy your health or improve it. Does he know what he's doing?

Brown, of Kalispell, is an advocate of improved nutrition education.

Art Barnes

Murfreesboro, TN:

August 5 th, 2004

To: Whom it may concern,

My name is Art Barnes and I'm writing to share my thoughts on the USDA Food Pyramid • Guide. My comments are as follows: I beleive that Dr. Atkins had a heart for People that were Overweight or Obesity, When I first heard of this diet, I said this is for me, so I did it and went from 242 to 192=50 lbs Loss in about 2/ 1/2 months well I stayed there long enough to get my Pride and Ego crank up by other people, Had severe knee problems for several months and winter came so I got off diet, (not Mr or Mrs Atkins), I think this is the number one cause that most people on any diet that gets off of it, is the fact they do like I did read the 14 day induction over and over and get it down , and lose 50 and more, then easily get steered away without reading the book all the way through about Maintenance and all, I have recently started over without knee problem, and I have gone from 232-202, 30 lbs this is done in June and July of 2004, I had three VA appointments in Atlanta VA , you can verify for problems I had and they all were cancel by myself because the problems went away, one in perticular was Angina Pain several times a day ,doing the Treadmill 30 minutes every other day, doing 4 separate things at Gym every other day, always once or twice, have not had one Angina Pain since 30 days now, breathing better, sleeping better, thinking better, never tired in afternoon, memory getting better as well, over and over, I just feel Great. People need to read his book , not just glance at it, when the 30 lbs were gone, I am still on the induction and I will stay there until I reach my Gold, but I am concentrating on the other three steps more than anything else, People tell me all kinds of things, you cannot eat pork and beef without eating other things veggies, you cannot eat this or that without killing yourself, they say all those things over and over, but Dr. Atkins does not say to quit eating this or that , he teaches you a way that you can do it without harming yourself, he doesn't leave anything out, he covers any given situation, for Good Health. I will go to 172, in a few months, it is very slow now but it goes down. I have found that any diet that leaves caffeenine off, has a much quicker drop on the Scales, this has been my personal experience, I am so glad that America has awaken to the Fact that other Countries have been doing the Low Carb for a long time, Low Sugar. We are no better than you folks, we are not saying, your Pyramid was your fault , it is everyones fault, because we all believe just like you did. Also some People say this, that is why I do not like the Atkins Diet, he lost 50lbs and gain it back, and now he is on it again with 30lbs down, so what if I do it again, It will not be Mr. or Mrs Atkins or their Centers fault.

One final remark: I beleive we would have a Better Healthier America, for Fighting, for Longer Life, Less Medications, Medical Expenses, you name it over and over, if you and your Stafft will please change the Present Food Pyramid so that it will be for the Low Carbs, Low Sugar, Low Cholestrol, Etc. Please Help Us.

Yours Truly

Art Barnes

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Cocoa, FL

Food Guide Pyramid Research Team
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Dear Research Team,

I am writing to encourage your support for a revision of the Food Pyramid. Every day in the news we hear about the obesity of America, and any trip to the local Wal-Mart I see lots of VERY obese people, mostly younger (since Pyramid introduction). In fact, many elderly aren't fat, and they were raised eating fresh farm foods, and weren't raised on potato chips, and Pepsi, and convenience foods. It pains me to see pretty girls just entering their 20's who already are over the 300 pound mark, and young men with ample spare tires.

As a woman of 48 years of age, and at 5'9" tall, and in good health, the effect of the years was taking a toll. I was 140 pounds when I was married 22 years ago, and slowly the weight had crept to 184 pounds over the years. Yet all this time I was following all the low fat recommendations as set by the pyramid...following low-fat diets, and making low-fat choices in the supermarket. Skim milk, fat-free mayonnaise, fat-free sour cream, fat-free cream cheese, low-calorie breads, boneless, skinless chicken breasts, lean meats fish, and veggies were my choices. Mind you, I never have had a sweet-tooth, but gave up potato chips in favor of less fatty pretzels, with fat-free, unappetizing dips. All that over 20 years, trying to meet the standards as set by the Food Pyramid, and still gaining weight! There is something wrong with this picture!

A few months ago in May, my doctor told me he was going to start me on blood pressure medicine, unless I would make an attempt to drop a few pounds. He was certain my blood pressure would drop if my weight did. I agreed to the plan...not wanting to have to be treated for hypertension any sooner than necessary.

Having heard from several friends and acquaintances that had seen remarkable results on the low-carbohydrate Atkins diet, I read the book and started to follow that routine, since the low fat way of life had gotten me 44 pounds heavier in the past 20 years.

Two months later in July, I returned to my doctor weighing 170 (14 pound loss), and blood pressure went from 158/98 down to 130/78. A great start! My cholesterol is a healthy 190, my LDL is 86, HDL 88, and triglycerides 81. These are good readings, and were taken two months into the Atkins way of eating! My doctor told me "I wish all my patients would actually do as I ask, as you have! We will not start you on blood pressure medication yet, but will continue to monitor your ongoing weight loss, because you can expect more reductions in your pressure as you continue to lose weight". We were both thrilled! I am now 163 pounds, close to my goal of 150, which would be fine for my

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height. And this is over only 3 months of eating the Atkins way. AND ENJOYING IT TREMENDOUSLY!

I'm not deprived of foods, I eat nutrient-dense vegetables, and meat, lots of fish, and calcium-rich dairy. Wholesome nuts and berries are delicious snacks for me and full of good nutrients! I don't have cravings for sugary junk food, I drink lots of water, and have all but eliminated sodas, which I DO NOT miss. I sleep better, and I get more energy for my good exercise routine (exercise is and should be part of the nutritional pyramid, I think).

I don't wish to put companies such as Coca-Cola, Frito-Lay, McDonald's and the like out of business, or otherwise mess up our United States economic foundation, but the health of our citizens is what we need to keep the country running effectively.

Please consider re-vamping the Pyramid entirely. Obviously, it has not been working as evidenced by our country's growing obesity, even among those of us who eat supposedly healthy, low-fat foods. By the way, as a nurse, I am to a good degree knowledgeable about healthy food choices, and have always enjoyed a "well-balanced" diet. I am suggesting that the low-carbohydrate lifestyle as advocated by Dr. Atkins, and with a nod towards the healthy choices of our much thinner ancestors merits your consideration. It is a way of life that is working for me, and thousands others. If you choose not to change or modify the Pyramid to reflect low-carbohydrate choices as an acceptable way of eating, I will choose not to follow it.

Sincerely,

Becky Bobowicz

Becky Bobowicz